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RUSSIA IN THE FAR EAST

BY

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WASHINGTON
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MAIN

NOTE

A Conference on the Limitation of Armament was called on August 11, 1921, by the Government of the United States, to meet in Washington on November 11, 1921, the third anniversary of the signing of the armistice between the victorious Allied and Associated Powers and Germany.

The representatives of the Powers originally invited to the Conference were the British Empire, France, Italy and Japan, for the consideration of the question of the limitation of armament, and China for the discussion of Pacific and Far Eastern Questions. Later, representatives of Belgium, the Netherlands and Portugal were invited to take part in the discussion of questions concerning the Pacific.

The tentative program agreed upon embraces the following subjects:

Limitation of Armament

1. Limitation of naval armament, under which shall be discussed:
   (*a*) Basis of limitation.
   (*b*) Extent.
   (*c*) Fulfillment.
2. Rules for control of new agencies of warfare.
3. Limitation of land armament.

Pacific and Far Eastern Questions

1. Questions relating to China.
   First: Principles to be applied.
   Second: Application.
   Subjects:
   (*a*) Territorial integrity.
   (*b*) Administrative integrity.
   (*c*) Open door—equality of commercial and industrial opportunity.
   (*d*) Concessions, monopolies or preferential economic privileges.
   (*e*) Development of railways, including plans relating to Chinese Eastern Railway.
   (*f*) Preferential railroad rates.
   (*g*) Status of existing commitments.
2. Siberia (similar headings).
3. Mandated islands (unless questions earlier settled).
   Electrical communications in the Pacific.

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Under the heading of "Status of Existing Commitments" it is expected that opportunity will be afforded to consider and to reach an understanding with respect to unsettled questions involving the nature and scope of commitments under which claims of rights may hereafter be asserted.

In the belief that the dissemination of information regarding the status of armaments, the collection of official documents throwing light upon the situation in the Pacific, and the furnishing of accurate accounts of the issues involved in some of the more important problems confronting the Conference, would render a service to the public and perhaps even to the delegates to the Conference, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace has undertaken the preparation and publication of a series of pamphlets of which the present pamphlet is one.

The meeting of so many nations in conference, following upon the close of a great war, is in itself an event of no mean importance. The holding of a conference upon the limitation of armament in succession to the First Hague Peace Conference called to consider the burden of armaments and the means for its decrease, with the possibility of an agreement in conference upon some of the questions of international import in addition to armaments, is an indication that the world is returning to "normalcy" and turning to the experience of The Hague.

That the Conference may be successful in all the phases of its program should be the desire of men and women of good-will in all parts of the world.

JAMES BROWN SCOTT,
Director.

WASHINGTON, D. C.,
October 31, 1921.

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RUSSIA IN THE FAR EAST

I. Penetration into Siberia

Slow, but very steady, was the advance of Russia into Siberia. For centuries did the Russians move onward, gradually driving back, conquering or assimilating the Mongolian aborigines. For a very long time Siberia seemed only a vast wilderness and a happy hunting ground for the fur trader and trapper. Later, and mainly on account of its great distance from European Russia, the Siberian country was used by the czars for purposes of penal colonization. Thus, there grew up that sad reputation, which clung to Siberia for many generations, of a bleak land of exile, where human suffering attained its very limit. The famous book of George Kennan, *Siberia and the Exile System,* helped much to popularize these ideas, bringing home to the outside world the worst sides of the former autocratic regime of Russia.

Yet this conception of Siberia is a very wrong one. Behind and around the penal settlements there developed a most healthy colonization by some of the best types of Russian Slavs. The peasant of European Russia was attracted by the fertile soil and agricultural resources and possibilities of Siberia and by the relative individual independence of his political and social life there; so he willingly migrated eastward, taking possession of the fertile land and forests he could find. But very naturally, such a pioneer movement called forth the selection of the best type of individuals, the most enterprising, most energetic and intellectually alert citizens, who thus soon constituted in Siberia a very progressive and flourishing population of settlers. Then, too, political exiles were nearly always the pick of the Russian educated classes, carrying away with them into the wilderness such an amount of intellectual energy that, toward the end of the nineteenth century, many Siberian Provinces could boast of having the best intellectually developed elements of the Russian nation. It is important to note in this respect, that racially the Siberian set-

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tlers belonged all, or nearly all, to the purely Russian stock; only among the political exiles do we find a small percentage of Poles and of other nationalities, sent out after the Polish insurrections of 1831 and 1863. The Mongolian, Tartar and Finnish aborigines were and remained mostly nomads, of a low type of culture, and never succeeded in influencing the Russian colonists either culturally or politically.

The hardships of life in Siberia quickly taught the local population self-reliance and self-confidence, strengthening the individual will and character, adding, in other words, just those traits that were conspicuously lacking among the Russians in the West. Since the Siberian territory was so unusually spacious, there always remained sufficient room for further expansion. The local population, outside the penal colonies, could move about freely in all directions, choosing the best location and richest land for their farms. There was no land-lordism nor any local aristocracy to hamper their movements or restrict their freehold. The government administration for many reasons was not interfering much with their individual life, tolerating thus the establishment and development of the fundamental principles of local autonomy and self-government. All this naturally tended to create a remarkably prosperous, but also individualistic and liberty-loving type of citizen, which soon crystallized into a very independent class of people, thoroughly Russian in their culture and way of thinking, yet Siberian in their self-reliance and love of their homes and of their personal freedom.

Finally, one must mention the fabulous natural wealth and resources of Siberia, superior in some respects to the American and Canadian West of the former pioneer days. On the Siberian plains there grows the finest wheat and barley of the world. The virgin Siberian prairies are wonderfully suited for cattle grazing; in some places in addition there have been started extensive cultures of alfalfa. Some of the Siberian districts have vast forests, with splendid timber, still untouched by human hand. The Altai mountain range is well known for its mineral wealth, including most of the precious metals, and gold is found in many of the eastern river deposits.

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Across the whole country there flow numerous navigable streams, forming easy and natural ways of communication between the different parts of the Siberian Provinces. There is unfortunately one great impediment in this respect, namely, most of these rivers run from south to north. Consequently, for a long time Siberia was in great need of lines of communication going west-east, and this need forcibly and materially handicapped the normal commercial development of the country. This urgent necessity was ultimately met by the construction of the Great Siberian Railway, which gave Siberia a most important outlet to European Russia in the West and the Pacific Ocean in the East. The significance of this new channel of communications and the role it was bound to play can be judged by the stupendous development of the Siberian economical resources that took place from the very first days the cross-country railway was opened for commercial traffic.

"Siberia," or the vast Asiatic possessions of Russia, lying east of the Ural Mountains, is really composed of two very different parts, first, the endless plains which lie between the Urals and the Lake Baikal, and, secondly, the Far Eastern Provinces, located east of the Baikal. These two sections are divergent in more ways than one; they differ topographically, economically, socially and even politically, and are bound to constitute in the future separate political units. The Western Provinces are, and always will remain, overwhelmingly agricultural, wheat-growing land, dotted here and there with magnificent timber. But in turn, they are divided into two groups of Provinces, one northern one, the other one southern, without much contrast between them. The four Northern Provinces, Tobolsk, Tomsk, Yeniseisk and Irkutsk, constitute "Siberia proper" and are at present the best developed section, with a steady rural population of thrifty and prosperous Russian colonists. The Southern Provinces, or "Steppe country," Semipalatinsk, Semiretchinsk and Akmolinsk, though possessing also tremendous natural resources, are much less mature, mostly on account of the lack of railway communications, since the Central Siberian Railway has not enough southern branches to satisfy their growing needs. All these Provinces,

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in the north as well as in the south, are colonized by purely Russian stock, with very few and insignificant exceptions, and are predominantly farmers, while the penal colonization is numerically small among them. The nomad aborigines are disappearing very fast and those of them who succeed in settling down acquire, without any difficulty, the Russian culture and modes of social and political life. In most places they were permitted to retain their local tribal organizations, and the most conspicuous among them are the Kirgiz tribes, who stand far above the other nomads in culture and political maturity.

The colonization of the second or eastern part of Siberia proceeded from the beginning on very different lines, first, for purely topographical reasons, and secondly, because of the distance that separated this section of the country from European Russia, intensified by the long continuance of utter lack of communication with the outside world. It is in these regions that we find concentrated the mineral wealth of Siberia and it was here in the mine fields that the Tsar's Government settled many of the penal and political exiles; they were to work the mines and live as far away from Russia as possible. Very naturally these settlements developed on quite different social and political lines from the agricultural colonies of the Western Siberian Provinces; their economic conditions of life were also quite distinct from the West. The steady eastward movement of the Russians brought them finally out to the Pacific and there they soon formed a commercial fringe of settlements along that coast, of an entirely divergent character from the rest of Siberia.

The process of colonization of Eastern Siberia reminds one very much of the development of the American Pacific coast, when for a long time California was separated from the Middle West and Eastern States by the wilderness of the Rocky Mountains. In many other ways, too, the American movement westward developed on similar lines to those of Russia in Siberia, except that in the United States these processes of pioneer expansion had always a much more intense and potent character than the similar processes of Russian colonizatioin of her Eastern Siberian frontiers. One of the more important causes that constantly hampered the Russian colonization movement, as com-

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pared with America, was her inefficient autocratic form of government. Another reason for her lagging behind was the presence in Eastern Siberia of the penal colonies, which naturally could not take a full share in the economic development of the country.

Eastern Siberia is composed of four Provinces and two separate Districts, the Transbaikal, Amur, Maritime and Yakutsk Provinces and the Kamchatka and Sakhaline Districts. The Transbaikal Province is rich in minerals and has a numerous Cossack and Buriat population, racially in many cases intermixed, as well as many of the penal settlements. The Maritime Province, with Vladivostok as its capital, is on the contrary overwhelmingly commercial; it is the Russian California. Yakutsk and the vast territory of the Kamchatka Peninsula are yet very sparsely populated, though possessing important natural resources, promising mines, splendid fisheries and a huge supply of fur-bearing animals. The Island of Sakhaline is also rich in mines, coal and timber. The southern half of the Island was lost to Russia, by the terms of the Portsmouth Peace Treaty, which ceded it to Japan. At present the Japanese seem to have taken definite possession of the northern half of the Island as well.

In considering the history of Siberian colonization one comes to the following conclusions: First, that Siberia, taken as a whole, has an exceptionally potential economic future, on account of its tremendous natural wealth. It is a land of great promise, marvelously rich, though hardly yet exploited to the limit of its possibilities. Secondly, Siberia consists to two very different parts, which are bound to constitute two distinct political units. On the one hand, there are the Western and Southern Provinces, overwhelmingly agricultural, with a population of thrifty peasant farmers, an extremely individualistic, self-reliant and liberty-loving people, and in the main, with distinctly conservative leanings. These settlers own their land and are very jealous of their freehold, interested in local self-government, as long as the latter concerns their village or county, but not caring much for the outside world, as long as they can get a good profit from their agricultural products. The cooperative movement in all its forms is very strong among these Siberian peasants and has achieved re-

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markable economic and to some extent even political results. The Eastern or Far Eastern Provinces, on the other hand, possess very different characteristics, commerce and industry visibly dominating. There exists, too, in these latter Provinces a much stronger racial intercourse with non-Russian nationalities, which necessarily influenced the life and character of the Russian colonists.

These important differences lead to a third weighty conclusion, the different political status which these two sections of Siberia are bound to maintain in the future Russian Commonwealth. Whereas Western Siberia will be perfectly content with firmly established local self-government (for instance, some form of well developed *zemstvo* organization), provided economic and financial independence from the center would be efficiently guaranteed, the Eastern section will demand much more and will surely endeavor to curtail the powers of the Central Government to a possible minimum.

The population of Siberia can be roughly divided into the following groups. The main body of inhabitants all over the country, constituting the vast numerical majority, are everywhere, except in the extreme East, farmer-settlers of the peasant class of purely Russian racial stock. Not much differing from them are the Cossacks, settled in the Siberian Provinces by government order and constituting autonomous, self-governing units, with a semi-military organization of their own. The Transbaikal and Amur Cossacks, however, are very much racially intermixed with the local aborigines of Mongolian origin. The West-Siberian Cossacks succeeded in preserving much better their racial purity. Then there are the numerous penal and political colonies, many of them thriving and thrifty. The religious dissenters among them are exceptionally wealthy and prosperous, constituting probably the best type of the Siberian population. Canada has some such colonies, though less numerous and less prosperous than the Siberian nonconformists.

Scattered among all these Russian colonies live the Mongolian nomads and aborigines, governed by their own chiefs and tribesmen, but under the control of Russian authorities. In Western

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Siberia they live quite separately from the Russian population; in the Eastern Provinces they freely intermingle. Further, there is the commercial class in the towns and cities, a trading bourgeoisie, an intelligentzia or numerically small educated class, possessing all the characteristic traits of the town population in general, but very independent and self-reliant in its tastes and ideas. Finally, in all the larger Russian settlements there is to be found and in always increasing numbers a scattered mass of Chinese and Mongolians, coming into Siberia from across the frontier, sometimes temporarily, for commercial purposes, but only too often with the intention of permanently establishing themselves as local citizens.

The great differences mentioned between Western and Eastern Siberia are of modern origin, but constantly increase in potential force, as time goes on. In former days they did not influence the development of the Russian Empire, nor the policies of its Government. The latter did not care about them, often trying to frustrate or stop them, though without much success on the whole, and their natural tendencies described above proved to be stronger and of greater vitality than St. Petersburg ever suspected. In the future they are bound to play a decisive role in the process of shaping the fate of the Russian Commonwealth.

II. Relations With China

In the process of Siberian colonization Russia came very soon and naturally into contact with China. In the early stages, as long as the Russian settlers still kept west of the Baikal, relations with China were very cordial, but rather abstract. Once in a while we hear of a Russian religious mission going to China, or of the appointment of a consul or agent, intended to look after the mutual trade interests, the chief article of import from China always having been Chinese tea. This peaceful period lasted approximately till the middle of the nineteenth century,[1] when unexpectedly the whole situation entirely altered.

[1]Typical for this period was the Russo-Chinese treaty of Kiakhta, signed October 21, 1727, which formed for more than a century the basis of the mutual relations between these two countries. The text of this treaty can be found in the collection of Sir Edw. Hertslet, *Treaties, etc. between Great Britain and China; and between*

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The great change was called forth by two new and important factors. First, Russia began to push energetically forward, invading and colonizing the regions on the left bank of the Amur River; and secondly, other European Powers started a lively competition for getting control of the Chinese markets and in their mutual rivalry betrampled the most sacred rights of sovereignty and independence of the Middle Kingdom. Russia unfortunately played no small role in this diplomatic game, which finally led to her own undoing.

Up to the fifties, we can find many private and official attempts on the part of Russians to penetrate into the Far-Eastern wilderness, but mostly without any lasting results. There was no system in these expeditions and all of them failed to establish any permanent cultural influence. They could conquer, but could not colonize nor civilize. They subdued the natives, without being able to enlighten them. The situation changed only in the middle of the nineteenth century. At that time Russia sent consecutive military and diplomatic missions to China, wresting from the latter some important privileges. Several treaties were signed, granting Russia most valuable advantages.

Russia first signed a treaty of commerce, in order to protect her trade along the Chinese border, but especially concerning the Mongolian caravan routes and the recognition of freedom for herself from all custom duties.[1] The importance of this treaty lies in the fact, that it formed the basis of the claims of Russia during the following decades. The enumeration of privileges, for instance, found in the agreement of 1851, was constantly referred to later on by the different Russian diplomatic agents and representatives.

Secondly, in 1858, when the Russian penetration and colonization along the northern banks of the Amur River had already taken definite form, the two countries signed a new treaty of

China and Foreign Powers, (London, 1908) vol. I; or in the official publication of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Recueil des Traités* (*Sbornik Traktatof*) (St. Petersburg, 1902), vol. I. An impartial and detailed history of the early Russian expansion eastward can be found in the volume of F. A. GOLDER, *Russian Expansion on the Pacific* (Cleveland, 1914).

[1]This is the agreement, known as the Kouldja Treaty of July 25, 1851. Cf. HERTSLET, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 305; and *Sbornik*, vol. I, no. 32, p. 242.

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friendship, delineating the frontier regions and proclaiming Russian sovereignty to the north of that stream.[1] In other words, from that day on Russia was firmly established in the Far Eastern Provinces, China having lost all her juridical claims to the territories lying north of the Amur. A few weeks later the Russian commercial privileges were restated and expanded to the whole of China, in an agreement signed at Tientsin.[2] Russia could hence trade in any open port of China, not restricting herself as previously to frontier places. She could send envoys to Peking, appoint consuls in the open ports and detach vessels of war to protect them. Special mention was also made of the interests of the Russian religious missions in China.

Not content with this achievement, Russia persuaded China to sign a new agreement two years later, once more enumerating the privileges of the Russian agents and merchants, as well as the advantages secured for Russian trade and the extraterritorial jurisdiction,[3] somewhat extending them and interpreting the granted privileges in Russia's favor.

These treaties with China which have been enumerated had three important consequences for Russia. First, as was pointed out above, they finally and juridically established the sovereignty of Russia in the new settled Provinces north of the Amur River and as far east as the Pacific. Russia thus reached her geographic eastern boundaries and found an outlet to the sea. Secondly, these treaties fundamentally changed the character of the mutual relations of the two countries. Russia was gradually becoming much more aggressive towards China, unhesitatingly, but selfishly pursuing two main objects in her new Far Eastern policy, viz., the colonization of the Amur and Maritime Provinces and the securing of the North China markets for the benefit of the Russian trade.

[1]Treaty of Aighoun, May 16, 1858; cf. HERTSLET, *op. cit.*, p. 310; *Sbornik*, no. 33, p. 247. The demarcation of the Mongolian boundaries was agreed upon by a special conference in 1864; cf. HERTSLET, *op. cit.*, p. 329.

[2]June 13, 1858; cf. HERTSLET, *op. cit.*, p. 311; *Sbornik*, no. 34, p. 249.

[3]Treaty of Peking, November 14, 1860; cf. HERTSLET, *op. cit.*, p. 318; *Sbornik*, no. 35, p. 255. HERTSLET also publishes the text of a revised convention for land trade, signed in Peking, April 27, 1869, which is not mentioned in the Russian *Sbornik;* this convention restates the privileges of the Russian trade in China and reaffirms all the advantages granted to the Russian merchants.

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In both cases she was for the time being completely successful. The colonization and development of these new Far Eastern Provinces were progressing by leaps and bounds. Previously, the settlements east of the Lake Baikal were looked upon by the Russian Government exclusively as penal colonies, among which the political exiles played a dominant role; now, quite another element of settlers began to move onward, exploring, colonizing and consolidating the regions along the Amur and further northeast. These Russian colonists soon became thoroughly convinced of the tremendous economic potentialities of this country, as well as of the wealth of its natural resources and of the advantages which they could derive from the exploitation of the North China markets. In other words, it suddenly dawned upon the Russians, what the opening up of the Far East might mean for the future of Siberia and for the whole of the Russian commerce. The penal and political colonization of the eastern wilderness was thus soon transformed into a pioneer movement, which was bound to mean a new epoch for Siberia and her inhabitants.

In order to further consolidate the colonization of the Amur Province, the Russian Government continued settling there groups of Cossack families, who were expected to provide for the military defence of the frontiersmen.

The climax of these processes of colonization was attained, just as in the case of California, when the Russians reached the Pacific coast and founded the city of Vladivostok. This was the final link of the Russian Empire, connecting European Russia through Siberia and the Far East to the Pacific coast. In order to help the pioneers to take possession of the coast, the Russian Government sent out warships for the further exploration of the Eastern Pacific and for the protection of the young colonies there; and naval commanders were duly instructed to hoist the Russian flag in the most suitable harbors along the coast, thus establishing and supporting the claims of sovereignty of the Russian Empire.

The offensive character of the Russian policy toward China described above can be explained by its chief object of securing the North China markets for the Russian merchants. It coincided exactly with the aggressiveness of the Western Powers in

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the South, but with this evident difference, that Russian aggression, as proved conclusively by the contents of the cited treaties, had mainly the so-called "Land Trade" in view, and, moreover, concerned Provinces and districts of relatively little interest to China. Both Mongolia and northern Manchuria were only sparsely populated, mostly by backward Mongolian tribes, far distant from the center and unimportant from the political point of view, whereas the European invasion took place in the very heart of China, making use of her great weakness during and after the unhappy Tai-Ping rebellion and taking advantage in the political field by undermining the principles of Chinese sovereignty.

Thus can be explained the seemingly strange fact, that in some cases Peking was quite ready to cooperate with St. Petersburg in the development of the Northern Provinces by Russians, because, first, the Chinese realized the advantages which could accrue to their country from the successful opening up of these new regions, and secondly, they hoped to find, and several times did find, support in Russia against the other Powers. In other words, the Peking Government was at times during that period a willing victim of Russia's Far Eastern expansion and was lending a friendly hand to the further unfolding of the Chinese relations with the Empire of the Czars. For the time being a certain equilibrium was established in the mutual relations of these two neighboring empires, Russia intent on the consolidation of her colonization along the Amur River, China content with the increasing trade on the Russian frontier.

In 1881 a new treaty was signed by Russia and China under the pretext of the former country returning to the latter the Province of Ili, which the Russians had occupied since 1871, but securing for Russia an indemnity of nine million gold rubles.[1] This however was a blind, back of which we find important privileges once more reaffirmed to Russia's advantage. Namely, again they

[1]Treaty of St. Petersburg of February 24, 1881; cf. HERTSLET, *op. cit.*, p. 340; *Sbornik*, no. 36, p. 264. The history of the transactions preceding the signature of the Treaty of 1881 is given in detail by H. CORDIER, *Histoire des relations de la Chine* (Paris, 1902), vol. II, ch. ix-xii.

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concerned the questions of land trade, the trade routes, consulates, custom tariffs, etc., enumerated in detail in a separate understanding (called *Réglement*), attached to this treaty. Thus matters stood for fifteen years, when much more serious troubles started for distracted China and when a new and formidable competitor appeared in the Far East in the person of Japan.

Meanwhile, Russia, having by this time achieved a marked success in her colonization of the newly acquired Provinces, began to turn her attention much farther South, namely, toward Manchuria proper and the Kingdom of Korea. Already in the eighties there had arisen a certain friction concerning Korea, England having occupied but later evacuated the Islands of Port Hamilton, and Russia having increased her influence at the Court of Seoul. Worse was to come, however, after the defeat of China in 1895. The intention of victorious Japan was to establish permanently her control over Korea, which was hence entirely and forever lost to China, and it was here, in Korea, that the first clash came between Japan and Russia.

By the Treaty of Peace of Shimonoseki,[1] China was forced to cede to Japan the Liaotung peninsula, with the splendid fortress of Port Arthur, and was made to pay a heavy indemnity, with no money in her treasury to meet this obligation. And it was that moment of hopeless weakness that the European Powers chose to take final hold of the Chinese markets. It was to be accomplished by loaning China money, with which she could pay her indemnity to Japan, and by forcing the latter to disgorge some of her territorial acquisitions, namely, Liaotung and Port Arthur.

The first hint of this new policy came from China's most trusted counselor, Sir Robert Hart, who informed the Peking Government that England, for certain considerations, was willing to float a loan which would enable China to pay the Japanese indemnity. Considering the straits in which the Peking Government was laboring at the time, it was welcome news for it. But as soon as the rumors of such an offer spread abroad, the other Powers naturally endeavored to do the same thing. Russia,

[1]English translation in J. V. A. MacMurray, *Treaties and Agreements with and concerning China, 1894-1919* (New York, 1921), vol. 1, p. 18.

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backed by France, also volunteered a loan, which China, after some hesitation, also accepted. Germany followed, and so the ball was started rolling, enslaving China to the European Governments by this subtle means of financial assistance. All the loans were to be covered by the income derived from Chinese customs, taxes on salt and the Likin tax.[1]

Having accomplished this, the European Governments realized that the consequent exploitation of the Chinese markets could progress favorably only on condition of building up the necessary lines of transportation. Thus, there started a feverish activity for acquiring railroad concessions and using them for political purposes as well.[2]

At that time there stood at the head of the Chinese Government a careful and far-sighted statesman, who realized very well the predicament of his poor country and that it could not do without the support of a friendly European Power. Accordingly, Li Hung-Chang chose Russia for this role; and during his whole career of government leadership he tried to base his policy on Russian friendship and support, bringing upon himself accusations of all sorts of crimes and immorality, none of which were ever proved. This friendly policy of Li toward Russia became evident even during the Shimonoseki transactions. Returning to Peking, after having signed the Treaty of Peace with Japan, he at once started conversations with the Russian representatives relating to concerted action in their mutual foreign policy and promising Russia new advantages in Eastern Siberia.

His Peking conversations soon became noised abroad, creating a great sensation. Local newspapers, the *North China Herald* among others, got hold of these rumors and published, in October, 1896, an account of a supposed secret agreement, subsequently known as the Cassini Convention, bearing the name of the Russian Minister to Peking, Count Cassini.[3] As a matter of fact no

[1]The enumeration and details of these loan-agreements, 1894-1896, can be found in MACMURRAY, *op. cit.*, vol. I; cf. also W. W. WILLOUGHBY, *Foreign Rights and Interests in China* (Baltimore, 1920).

[2]Cf. MACMURRAY, *op. cit.*, and WILLOUGHBY, *op. cit.*

[3]It is often quoted by historians and politicians, though H. CORDIER in his *Histoire des relations de la Chine*, has long ago pointed out the vagueness and incoherence of the newspaper text.

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such convention ever existed. The Peking conversations of Li with Cassini were only a part, and probably the least important one, of the secret diplomatic intercourse between Russia and China; much more momentous transactions took place in St. Petersburg and Berlin, during the voyage of Li Hung-Chang abroad, in the preceding winter and spring. The newspaper text, on the whole seems to be a vague and confusing combination of the gist of several agreements, the bank and railway concessions and partly the alliance of May, 1896, all of them concluded in the foregoing months of Li's travels in Europe.

He had been commissioned by his government to go to Russia and represent China at the Tsar's coronation. In consequence, foreseeing the necessity of an amicable understanding with Russia, Li carefully paved his way in the political situation. He knew that Russia was just then turning over a leaf in her Far Eastern policy. He realized that the period of Russian colonization was now shifting into a policy of expansion, and he cleverly made preparations to meet Russia half way and cooperate with her, making ceratin concessions to her and staying her impossible demands, but all with the one main purpose in mind of finding in Russia an ally capable of assisting him in warding off the aggression of the other Powers, whom Li, as has been said, feared much more than his northern neighbor. As soon as Li reached St. Petersburg, diplomatic conversations with him were at once started by the Russian Government, pursuing three parallel objects, the securing of two concessions and a friendly alliance.

In order to appreciate the political situation of those days, we must bear in mind the composition and policies of the government which Li found on his arrival in St. Petersburg. At the head of the Ministry of Finance during those days was a very strong and exceedingly energetic statesman, S. J. Witte, who had set his mind on the development of the Far Eastern markets of Russia, considering them to be a most profitable opening for the young Russian industry and a means of exploiting Siberia through the just completed cross-country railroad. Witte thought, and very rightly so, that the outlet to the Pacific would be a tremendous stimulus for the commercial and industrial development of

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Siberia and prove of no small advantage even to the industries of European Russia. Having these objects in view, he endeavored to get Li Hung-Chang to agree to grant Russia two concessions, one concerning a bank, the other relating to the construction of a railway across Manchuria. After some bickering on both sides these ends were attained.

Witte then started, with the help of French bankers, a Russo-Chinese bank, with a capital of 11¼ million rubles and 5 million taels. The president was to be a Chinese figurehead, but the active managers were Russians, working under the direction of Witte.[1] This bank was meant to carry out Witte's policy of peaceful penetration of Northern China, exploit the Manchurian market and establish the Russian political influence in the Far East. But it was also meant to finance Witte's plans of railroad construction. The Siberian main line had just reached the Baikal Lake and now was to be continued farther, following the northern bend of the Amur River. Witte had conceived the plan of leasing from China a strip of territory across Manchuria in order to construct the Siberian railroad in a straight line to Vladivostok instead of building it along the northern curve of the Amur. It shortened the railroad considerably, but at the same time gave the Russians a firm grip on the Manchurian market. From the middle of Northern Manchuria Witte planned to build another line south to Port Arthur, with a branch south-westward to Shanhaikwan, securing for Russia in addition to the Manchurian market, a second outlet to the Pacific.

It was an elaborate and clever program, intended to establish an extensive system of peaceful penetration. Unfortunately, the peaceful aims of Witte were later on overshadowed by militaristic and imperialistic designs of other Russian Ministers. It is a very usual case, when the military elements are tempted to get control of the foreign expansion policy of a government.

The second agreement, concerning the described plans of railroad construction, was finally signed on September 8, 1896, and curiously enough in Berlin.[2] There is good reason to believe that

[1] August-September, 1896. Cf. MacMurray, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 74.
[2] Cf. MacMurray, *ibid.*

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Witte's policy toward China was not only well known in Germany but that much of its inspiration came Berlin. Germany then was playing a sure game, realizing very well Russia's internal weakness; heads she won, tails Russia lost. The German Government was not averse to seeing Russia become entangled in the Far East. The more she was involved in the Chinese trouble, the less she was able to participate in European questions and support her Western ally, France. The latter country, on the contrary, was actuated by purely financial considerations in backing the Russian Far Eastern policy. The Paris bankers thought it was a good investment for French capital, and willingly loaned Witte the money necessary to start the Bank, and for the railway construction.

The Russian Government, however, was not content to stop there. Simultaneously with the transactions concerning the two concessions, the Russians were conducting with Li purely political conversations as well during the spring of 1896, and in absolute secrecy convinced him of the necessity of signing a treaty of alliance, which was directed against China's dreaded enemy, Japan.[1]

It is interesting to note that in Article I Japanese expansion in Korea is also mentioned, parallel to any possible aggression on her part in China or Russia, as a *casus foederis*. The other articles describe in detail the possible military cooperation of the two Contracting Powers in case of a war with Japan. In Article IV is found a clear reference to the possibility of Russia building a railway across Manchuria, but with this difference: in May, 1896, Russia stipulated such a construction only in case of war, whereas in September of the same year China agreed that Russia should build the line immediately in any case.

Such were the three ominous agreements signed by Russia and China in the course of 1896. It speedily became evident, however, that Russia was even then not satisfied to remain where she was and started a further expansion southward, trying to lay a hand on Korea too. Russian agents appeared in numbers at Seoul and Russian officers were appointed instructors in the Korean army. The Korean arsenal was placed under Russian

[1]Cf. MacMurray, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 81.

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supervision and the Korean Court consulted Russian advisers, and so forth.

China at first looked favorably on such developments, evidently hoping that Russia would wrest Korea from the Japanese and later reestablish the lost Chinese suzerainty. Japan, however, was in no way willing to forego her interests and advantages in Korea. She was seemingly ready to acknowledge Russia's influence in the North, but on condition of a reciprocal recognition of her own position in the South. This, the Russian Government never understood, but pushed serenely southward, thus bringing upon themselves a disastrous conflict with Japan.

It was at that time that Witte's original mistake became evident. He personally had in view exclusively a commercial policy of peaceful penetration, using as means of expansion his Russo-Chinese Bank and the Chinese Eastern Railway. They were powerful agencies, no doubt, for the spreading of the Russian control in the Far East; they soon acquired a good reputation and helped to exploit the North China markets. But behind the commercial flag there cropped up political influences, which sooner or later were bound to thwart Witte's plans and give them a much more militant character. Here lay the greatest possible danger for Russia. The more she became involved in the Manchurian enterprise, the stronger were the temptations to move farther and farther south, toward the warm sea, but also right into the path of a formidable rival.

Instead of heeding the growing danger, the military and nationalistic elements of the Russian Government decided to take their chances in pushing the Russian claims to the limit. They were not satisfied with Witte's plan of acquiring another commercial outlet in the Pacific, but wanted in addition to get a military stronghold there as well. Proofs exist that the inspiration for building a fortified port on the Gulf of Pechili came again from Berlin.[1] The Russian Government, however, willingly adopted the idea and secured a hold on Port Arthur and the Liaotung peninsula, which the European Powers had forced Japan to re-

[1] Cf. HERMAN BERNSTEIN, *The Willy-Nicky Correspondence* (New York, 1917), and ISAAC DON LEVINE, *Letters from the Kaiser to the Czar* (New York, 1920).

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turn to China a very short time before. This, for Japan, meant insult added to injury. It must be said to Witte's honor, however, that he at once realized the terrible danger of such an action and vigorously protested, but to no avail; the militarists and imperialists were already in control.

In December 1897 a Russian squadron, commanded by Admiral Doubassoff, occupied Port Arthur. The Russian Chargé d'Affaires informed the Chinese Government that Russia had no intention of infringing the sovereignty of China, but merely desired to protect her from the aggression of other Powers. Russia promised to withdraw as soon as this danger disappeared. Germany soon followed, occupying under the same pretext Kiaochow;[1] England took possession of Weihaiwei; and France seized Kuangchowwan. Thus, instead of saving China from outward aggression, Russia's action proved to be the first step towards the dangerous foreign invasion of Chinese territory which humbled China's prestige and encroached upon her rights of sovereignty.

All of these cases of occupation took the legal form of "lease of territory," very similar to the idea embodied in the Russian lease of the strip of land across Manchuria for the Siberian Railroad.[2] Chinese sovereignty was nominally maintained and respected, but the local administration was given entirely into the hands of the occupying foreign Powers. The convention for the lease of Port Arthur to Russia was signed in Peking on March 27, 1898, and an additional agreement, defining the boundaries of the leased territory, on May 7, 1898. By this understanding, the sovereignty of China was explicitly recognized, as well as the allegiance of the Chinese subjects, but Russia acquired all governmental rights, being allowed to establish her own courts of law and administration and given practically a free hand there. A few weeks later (July 6, 1898), an agreement was signed concerning the building of the southern branch of the Russian railway. This was to connect the Siberian main line running through

[1] Germany actually signed the agreement with China a few days earlier than Russia, March 6 and 27, respectively.

[2] Cf. MACMURRAY, *op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 112 *et seq.*; also WILLOUGHBY, *Foreign Rights and Interests in China*, (Baltimore, 1920).

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the north of Manchuria with the new outlets on the Liaotung peninsula, Port Arthur (for military purposes) and Dalny (for commercial use).

The following years were full of political complications, involving Russia more and more in the Far Eastern tangle. The first crisis arose in the years 1900-1901, during and after the Boxer uprising, when the Empress Regent of China vainly endeavored to get rid of the foreigners. While the fighting was going on in and around Peking, the European Powers seemed in friendly accord and acted in cooperation; but as soon as the uprising was quelled, very serious divergencies appeared and the different Powers soon drifted away from one another, each one intent on pursuing its own selfish policy. Russia's evident intention in that case was to assure herself an absolutely free hand in Manchuria and thus consolidate her influence in the Far East. She succeeded in getting a valuable concession in Tientsin, and occupying Newchwang and Anshanshan.

By this time, however, the Western Powers became thoroughly alarmed at the growth of Russia's influence and consequently began to exert considerable pressure upon her, trying to make her release her hold on North China. It was due to that pressure that Russia concluded a new agreement with China, signed on April 8, 1902, ostensibly to reestablish Chinese authority in Manchuria, in which she promised to withdraw the Russian troops, leaving China to take over the protection of the railway and of the Russian citizens.[1]

Further promises followed on the part of Russia, but, to the great anxiety of the other Powers, none of these promises seemed to have been kept. Russia was slowly consolidating her position in North China and was not willing to withdraw. All sorts of rumors were being spread on every side, intensifying the world's distrust of Russia's policy and naturally magnifying her aggressiveness and imperialism. The diplomatic atmosphere was becoming steadily hotter and the political horizon darker. Even among the Russian officials there were men, who felt the storm

[1] Details of the cited transactions between Russia and China are given in MacMurray, *op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 326 *et seq.*

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coming and warned their Government, counseling moderation, but without success.

The policy of Russia during the fateful years of 1902-1903 seemed on a declining plane. The military and nationalistic elements were definitely in control in St. Petersburg and, as usual, absolutely blind to the growing dangers of the situation.

During all this trouble China played a very passive rôle. Outwardly her sovereignty was still respected, or at least often mentioned, but, as a matter of fact, her territory was simply the playground for European diplomats and politicians. The Japanese war and Russia's defeat made no material change in the position of China. The former dominance of Russia was now replaced by a very friendly and close cooperation of Russia and Japan; and the old policy of exploitation was continual with little regard for the interests or wishes of the Chinese. Consequently, the relations between Russia and China, from 1904 to the Great War, show a marked absence of independence on the part of China.

III. Relations with Japan

Russia's relations with Japan, as compared to her relations with China, are very different in character. First, they are of quite recent origin, and, secondly, from the very beginning they have been exceedingly militant.

Russia came into close contact with Japan only at the time of the Sino-Japanese War of 1895. Russia was then energetically backing the Chinese plenipotentiaries; with the active support of the other European Powers, she was endeavoring to deprive Japan of the fruit of her victory, by forcing her to return to China the Liaotung peninsula and by granting China loans with which to pay the war indemnity.

Russia took this hostile stand toward Japan because she herself had developed definite ambitions in the Far East. One must remember in this respect that the nineties of last century were a period of industrial expansion in Russia, and that among her statesmen there were several men of the type of S. J. Witte, who had made up their minds that the Far East could be a splendid

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outlet for Siberia. Not knowing much about Japan, they had a thorough contempt for that country, but realized that the Japanese claims, as formulated at Shimonoseki, would forcibly impede Russia and compete with their policy of controlling the North China markets; hence the desire of the Russian Government to frustrate any further Japanese advance in China.

Japan, on the other hand, flushed with her easy victory over China, was anxious to consolidate her influence, at least in Korea, and to some extent in Southern Manchuria. She must have felt very keenly the humiliation inflicted upon her by the Great Powers, who desired to limit her in the use of her victory.[1]

There is no doubt that, had Russia been careful in handling the situation, an easy compromise would have been achieved. Japan was still weak and a novice in European diplomacy, ready to accept a policy of cooperation, provided it would not hurt her pride or damage her national interests. With a better understanding of these circumstances, Russia could have succeeded in amicably delineating the mutual spheres of interest, although certainly at China's expense. She would have kept the northern markets, permitting Japan to spread her influence southward. Such a compromise, however, was made impossible by the increasing power of the military and nationalistic elements among the Russian Court and government circles. And it was among these circles least of all that there could be found any desire to understand the Japanese. Russia's attitude toward Japan, in consequence, became extremely overbearing, irritating and exasperating, and thus from the very beginning the mutual relations of these two countries were full of suspicion and distrust, which created many dangerous misunderstandings. Japan had to learn very early the clandestine ways of European secret diplomacy.

Russia was by no means content to spread her influence in northern Manchuria and to exploit the North China markets. She also wanted Korea and Southern Manchuria, endeavoring

[1] The treaty of peace was signed at Shimonoseki on April 17, 1895, and already, on November 8 of the same year, Japan had to "retrocede" to China the Liaotung peninsula with the coveted fortress of Port Arthur. Cf. MacMurray, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, pp. 18, 50.

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to establish herself very firmly in Seoul. This hold over China was to be acquired, as we have seen, by means of foreign loans.

Yet, this very unfavorable setting of the opening relations between Russia and Japan could not produce disastrous consequences at once; it took some years for them to become evident. As above stated, Japan at that moment was a newcomer in the game, feeling still weak and isolated, and she could not well afford vigorous protests. Therefore she outwardly subsided, keeping her temper and biding her time. The Tokyo Government, notwithstanding the mutual distrust, realized that some *modus vivendi* must be established with Russia and consented to start diplomatic conversations, which very soon resulted in the conclusion of several agreements.

First, there was signed at St. Petersburg on May 27, 1895, a treaty of commerce and navigation, securing for the citizens of both countries the usual privileges of equality of treatment and freedom of trade, according to the principle of the "most-favored-nation" (Articles 1 and 14). The only exception was the coastal trade of both countries, which was regulated by municipal legislation (Article 10). It is important to note that Article 17 of that treaty makes a special mention of abolishing henceforth any rights of extraterritoriality in Japan, and Article 18, of superceding all the previous agreements then existing between Russia and Japan.[1] Finally, Article 19 contains the provision that the treaty should go into effect only four years after its conclusion. Such a long period does not often lapse between the conclusion of international treaties and the date on which they go into effect, and can be taken as another proof of how wary of one another the signatory Powers were at the time.[2] This treaty went into effect on July 17, 1899, according to a special announcement of the respective Governments, and it was not until that date that Russia finally lost her privileges of extraterritorial jurisdiction in Japan. Thus we see how late the principle of

[1]There was made, however, one exception, namely for the treaty of May 7, 1875, which was to contiue in full force. This was the treaty that settled the dispute between Russia and Japan concerning Sakhalin and the Kuriles Islands.

[2]The text of this treaty can be found in the *Sbornik*, published by the Russian Foreign Office, vol. I, no. 65, p. 500. A similar treaty was concluded with England in 1894 (Kimberley-Aoki), also abolishing extraterritoriality.

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equality came into being in the mutual relations of Russia and Japan.

Secondly, both Governments tried to adjust their policies in Korea, where Russia was endeavoring to establish her influence. For the time being, Japan seemed to have decided to seek the cooperation of Russia. Accordingly, on June 16, 1896, a protocol was signed at St. Petersburg (Lobanoff-Yamagata), in which the two Powers promised to cooperate in Korea and withdraw their armed forces. But no sooner was this act signed, than it was violated by Russia, who started to gain control of the Korean army and the Korean finances. This naturally aroused suspicions and opposition on all sides, Japan in particular being anxious to frustrate the Russian aims. The protests that followed made Russia realize that she had gone too far; and the Russian Government made an effort to allay the Japanese distrust by beginning new conversations, which ended in the signing of another protocol, this time at Tokyo, on April 25, 1898 (Nishi-Rosen), in which both Powers agreed once more to recognize the sovereignty and independence of Korea, while still secretly hoping to supercede them by their own control. Any future interference with the Korean army or finances could take place only by common agreement and mutual consent; Russia in particular promised not to "obstruct the development of the commercial and industrial relations between Japan and Korea." Such were the first steps in this very complicated situation, when Russia and Japan commenced to match their forces, the latter Power still badly handicapped by her inferiority and isolation.

The Boxer Uprising of 1900 taught a second and much more important lesson to Japan. The policy of the Great Powers toward China after the rebellion, and their evident desire to seize what they could in the disintegration of the Middle Kingdom, made Japan desire to participate in the division of spoils on an equal footing with the other Powers. This, also, must have forced her to realize more than ever, that she could not achieve much while she was isolated; in other words, Tokyo must have seen the necessity of finding some friend among the European Powers.

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The first object, to establish her participation in the Far Eastern policy of the Great Powers, was easier attained than the second one, to find an ally. After the abrogation of extraterritoriality (in the nineties) and the cooperation of Japanese troops during the quelling of the Boxer uprising, Japan succeeded in securing a position of relative equality among the other nations. At least, there were several occasions when Japan participated in the common action of the Powers toward China; for instance, she took part in the transactions concerning the "open door" policy, championed by the United States in 1900, and in those relating to the re-establishment of peaceful and normal conditions after the Boxer riots, in the same year.[1] Yet this did not completely satisfy her. Japan wanted more than participation; she was intent on expansion, and this she could not achieve alone.

Thus, in 1900 Japan set out to find a friend and ally. She carefully examined the complex situation in Europe, tested the relative strength of the different Powers, their past history, mutual relations, political conditions and modes of development. On the whole, one must acknowledge the great success of this task. Owing to subtle methods and the statesmanlike qualities of her diplomatic representatives, Japan sized up the European situation extremely well. It soon became evident that her choice must lie between England and Russia. France did not count for much in Far Eastern affairs, and Germany purposely declined any direct participation, preferring to remain behind the scenes. During the years 1900-1901 Japan cautiously felt her way, studying the situation simultaneously in London and St. Petersburg. Baron Hayashi conducted conversations with Lord Lansdowne, while the Marquis Ito had his talks with Witte and Lamsdorff; the Government at Tokyo received the reports from both sides and had abundant and enlightening material for making the necessary choice.

The difference in the character of the foreign policies of the two countries were soon apparent. Whereas Russia was constantly overbearing and haughty, England seemed ready to enter into some understanding on terms of perfect equality. There is good reason to believe that at the beginning Tokyo might

[1] Cf. MacMurray, *op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 221, 230, 278, 309.

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have preferred an agreement with Russia: the two countries were near neighbors; they had the same interests in Manchuria, in China, and on the Pacific coast; an alliance between them would have been the natural outcome for the whole situation, solving most difficulties. But the chance was hopelessly spoiled by the arrogant attitude and the shortsightedness of the Russian Government.

In 1901 the Tokyo Government finally made up their minds in favor of England and instructed Baron Hayashi to proceed with his conversations with Lord Lansdowne. These transactions soon took a definite form, culminating in the signing in London of the Anglo-Japanese Treaty of Alliance on January 30, 1902. It cannot be said that China profited by the final choice of Japan. The Anglo-Japanese alliance was and proved to be a no better guarantee for the integrity of the Chinese Empire than any Russo-Japanese agreement would have been.

To appreciate in full the diplomatic situation of that epoch, one must keep in mind the position taken by Germany. Between England and Russia she was the *tertius gaudens,* carefully abstaining from any direct participation. She was well informed of what was going on both in London and St. Petersburg, but much preferred to have her hands absolutely free. Thus, in February, 1902, when Komura, the Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs, asked the German Ambassador if his country cared to join the new alliance, the latter politely but firmly declined. Least of all did Germany at that moment want to cooperate with Great Britain.[1]

Having secured such a powerful ally, Japan naturally felt much stronger. She was now quite able to withstand the Russian diplomatic pressure, and effectively asserted her own claims, especially in Korea, while Russia, on her side, was absolutely blind to the danger involved in constantly increasing her demands and thus proceeding headlong into a disastrous conflict. Neither the Russian Government, nor the Court circles and the Tsar himself wanted to believe that Japan could press her claims home, and in particular that she was now starting feverishly to prepare

[1]Cf. Memoirs of *Hayashi* and *Eckardtstein.*

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for an armed encounter. They still treated the Japanese as a negligible quantity and chose that most dangerous moment for launching a foolish and criminal enterprise in Korea, in the very center of Japanese ambitions.

A few unscrupulous adventurers, a former officer of the guards, Bezobrazof, an Admiral, Abaza, and some less known men took advantage of the situation, and persuaded the Tsar of the remarkable financial possibilities of exploiting the Korean natural resources. They organized a private company for the purpose of exploiting a timber and mining concession on the Yalu River and succeeded in convincing the Tsar and several members of his family to invest their personal capital in that concession. The local officials in the Far East, with the Viceroy, Admiral Alexeiev, at their head, seeing the influence that Bezobrazof had at Court, acquiesced instead of protesting and warning their Government of the imminent danger that such action created by arousing the Japanese. Much more blame, however, falls on the Russian Ministers, who did not object against this short-sighted enterprise. Witte alone realized the danger and strongly urged his Government to take immediate measures to check the adventure of Bezobrazof, but absolutely in vain. In the Government there were actually Ministers who were glad to see more trouble coming with Japan, hoping that it would divert the attention of the Russian nation from the constantly growing social dissatisfaction. For instance, Plehve, Minister of the Interior, cynically remarked that "a little war would help the Government very much." The war, however, proved to be neither little, nor of any help to the autocratic Government. The Tsar himself seemed to have had only contempt for Japan, a feeling which was strengthened by his own conceit, as well as by the pernicious influence of the Kaiser. Wilhelm was cleverly and strongly urging the Tsar to withstand the Japanese claims, thus leading him toward a certain armed conflict. Germany could lose nothing by such a policy, but could gain immensely by involving Russia in a Far Eastern quarrel.

Neither was the Yalu adventure the only mistake of Russia; simultaneously she tried to lease the harbor of Mosampo from Korea intending to transform it into a naval base while her agent,

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Pavlov, intrigued at the Seoul court. In order to checkmate the Russian designs, Japan started direct negotiations in St. Petersburg and during the summer of 1903 made a last effort to settle the dispute amicably, but again met in St. Petersburg with a distinct reluctance on the part of Russia to give her any decisive answer. The Russian replies were as evasive and unsatisfactory as ever.[1]

Witte describes this in his *Memoirs*[2] in a striking sentence: "We were headed straight for war and at the same time we did nothing to prepare ourselves for the eventuality; we acted as if we were certain that the Japanese would endure everything without daring to attack us." This was absolutely true. Unfortunately Witte himself has to bear a serious part of the blame for at least having started the aggressive Russian policy, though personally he had only "peaceful penetration" in view.

On January 13, 1904, Japan finally lost patience, and presented her fourth proposals, which amounted to an ultimatum. She declared that she was prepared to recognize Russian interests in Manchuria, provided Russia would acknowledge the Japanese control over Korea. But even then Russia temporized and evaded answering the Japanese demands. On February 8, the Japanese destroyers entered Port Arthur and fired torpedoes at the unprepared and unprotected Russian battleships. The following day war was declared.

From the very beginning, the war with Japan was not popular among the Russian people; most of them never even understood for what their country was fighting. It did help, however, to increase immensely the strength of the revolutionary discontent. As defeat followed defeat, the Government was gradually forced, in the summer of 1905, to grant half-hearted and insincere concessions. This social dissatisfaction finally forced the Government to conclude the peace which was signed on September 5, 1905, at Portsmouth, New Hampshire.[3] According to the Peace Treaty, Russia returned to Japan the leased Liaotung peninsula,

[1] Cf. *Staatsarchiv*, vol. 69, pp. 212, *et. seq.*; STANLEY K. HORNBECK, *Contemporary Politics in the Far East* (N. Y., 1916), ch. xiv, p. 243.

[2] SERGIEI WITTE, *Memoirs* (N. Y., 1921), p. 123.

[3] Cf. MACMURRAY, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 522.

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including Port Arthur and Talienwan (Dalny), and ceded in addition the southern half of the Sakhalin Island (Articles 5 and 9). Japan also received the southern branch of the Manchurian railroad (from Kuancheng-tzu down to Port Arthur; Article 6), as well as the coal mines worked for the benefit of the railroad, which proved a very important acquisition for the control of the South Manchurian markets. All these transfers of privileges in Manchuria were nominally to be sanctioned by China ("The two High Contracting Powers mutually engage to obtain the consent of the Government of China"), a stipulation which was meant to safeguard the Chinese rights of sovereignty. No war indemnity was exacted from Russia; this was probably the most remarkable achievement of Witte at the Portsmouth Conference.

With the treaty of Portsmouth begins an entirely new epoch in the history of Russia's position in the Far East, and in her relations with Japan as well—an epoch very different in character and meaning from the preceding period. Instead of the former hostility and mutual distrust we find close cooperation and friendship between these two Empires. They now amicably agreed to define their mutual interests and spheres of influence and decided to assist one another in the exploitation of China and Manchuria; Korea was henceforth entirely given over to the full control of Japan and soon became a mere dependency.

The sudden change that came over the relations of Russia and Japan, a change so thorough and complete that it transformed hatred and suspicion into friendship and copartnership, can serve as a convincing proof of how much artificiality there was in the former relations of the two Empires and how easily could have been established some sort of friendly *modus vivendi.* This time, however, the Powers went to the other extreme, evincing a distinct desire to exclude any outside interference with what they were doing or intending to do in North China. There could be no question any more of an "open door" policy in Manchuria; the door was definitely slammed.

The treaty of Portsmouth necessitated further agreements; first, China was to express her acquiescence; secondly, Russia and Japan themselves had to settle additional details in order to carry

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out several provisions of the treaty. For instance a separate convention was to be concluded for the regulation of the connecting railway services in Manchuria, special procedure was to be adopted concerning the option of Russian citizens in the ceded territories and concerning their real estate and other property. Further, Russia promised to grant Japan extensive fisheries rights on the Pacific coast and to reestablish the former principles of the commercial treaty with Japan (1895), which had been in abeyance during the war. China sanctioned the transfer of leased territories from Russia to Japan in a special treaty, signed in Peking, December 22, 1905. It is very significant that Japan in this respect promised to conform to the original agreements concluded between China and Russia, "so far as circumstances permit" (Article 2); this formula gave Japan practically a free hand in Manchuria,[1] though she repeatedly promised not to impair in any way Chinese sovereignty and not to act inconsistently with the principle of equal opportunity (cf. Article 3, Treaty of Portsmouth).

In 1907 followed new agreements with Russia, but of two distinct types. First, further arrangements for commercial purposes were made, all of which were public; second, treaties defining the mutual political interests were signed. To the first type of agreements belong the Convention and Protocol, signed in St. Petersburg on June 13, 1907, concerning the junction of the Russian and Japanese railways in Manchuria, the Convention, signed on July 28, concerning commerce and navigation, and another one, signed the same day and relating to the fisheries of the Pacific coast—the latter extremely valuable to the Japanese—and, finally, numerous agreements, signed by Russia and China on the one hand, and by Japan and China on the other, concerning the local situation in Manchuria, postal communications, telegraph lines, exploitation of mines, new railroad construction, etc.[2] This was only a natural consequence of the newly established accord between Russia and Japan, who had to readjust their mutual policy of exploiting Manchuria. Most of these agreements have a purely technical character.

[1] MacMurray, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 557 *et. seq.*
[2] Cf. MacMurray, *op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 612-803.

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Quite different is the second type, which was meant to support politically the above mentioned commercial policy of the two new friends and allies. Two agreements belong to this group, one made public,[1] the other remaining secret even up to the present day.[2] They belong to the same period of 1907, and were meant, to describe comprehensively the spheres of mutual interest; to maintain the sovereignty of China[3]; and to respect the *status quo*, endeavoring thus to exclude any possible intrusion or advance of any other Power in Manchuria. It was this last object that the secret agreement of that year was intended to further confirm and consolidate, aiming at the friendly advice of the United States, which was earnestly trying to enforce the policy of the "open door." Neither Russia nor Japan wanted any such interference in a sphere that they now considered their very own.

Meanwhile, the American Government insisted on the "open door" principle. During the Taft administration, Secretary Knox worked out a whole project of neutralization of the Manchurian railroads and the opening up of Manchuria in general for international trade.[4] This brought a prompt and decisive refusal from the two allied Empires and a new agreement between them, partly secret, signed in St. Petersburg on July 4, 1910.[5]

Russia and Japan once more affirmed their desire to cooperate in Manchuria, to maintain the *status quo* and to communicate with each other in all questions concerning such a mutual policy. This naturally frustrated the fight for the "open door," as it was

[1] Cf. MACMURRAY, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 657.

[2] It is only vaguely referred to in later treaties.

[3] The object of recognizing China's "independence and territorial integrity" seems only to have been a blind for the exclusion of any other Power.

[4] For details see, e. g., J. F. ABBOTT, *Japanese expansion and American Policies* (N. Y., 1916), ch. III, p. 65.

[5] Cf. MACMURRAY, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 803; the alleged secret treaty of that date was published by the New York World in a series of articles by Capt. Schreiner and B. von Siebert, in the spring of 1921; the text runs as follows:

"To confirm and further develop the provisions of the Secret Treaty of June 17-30, 1907, the Russian and the Japanese governments agree to the following provisions:

"ARTICLE 1. Russia and Japan recognize as the boundary of their specific spheres of interest in Manchuria the line of demarcation as defined in the supplementary article of the Secret Treaty of 1907.

"ART. 2. The two contracting parties agree mutually to recognize their special interests in the areas set forth above. Each of them may also, each within its own sphere of interest, take such measures as shall be deemed necessary for the maintenance and protection of these interests.

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meant to do, and was a strong refutation of the proposal of Secretary Knox. Russia and Japan were asserting that nothing really threatened the integrity of China, nor the principle of the "open door"; that the Chinese Empire could find a much better safeguard in their alliance than in any international compact; and that the idea of making Manchuria a buffer state was most distasteful to them. Finally, it is important to note that Great Britain was at that time very much pleased with the development of friendly relations between Russia and Japan and told them so several times. After 1907 England began to build up friendly relations with Russia and was in consequence very eager to help the cooperation of Russia with her own Eastern ally and for that reason unhesitatingly gave her support to the new Far Eastern policy of the Government of the Tsar. During the years that followed we see the further development of the same policy on similar lines; the mutual commercial interests were being settled by public agreements, concluded *ad hoc,* as necessity called for determining newly arising details of daily life,[1] and parallel was kept the close political cooperation, couched in terms of secret agreements. On July 8, 1912, a third secret treaty was signed, mentioned in the alleged secret treaty of 1916, having evidently the same object in view, viz., the mutual assistance in the exploitation of Manchuria and in the exclusion of the other Powers from any participation in the North China trade.

This policy naturally found its climax during the Great War. On July 3, 1916, two more agreements were signed at Petrograd,

"ART. 3. Each party undertakes to place no obstacle of any kind in the way of the confirmation and future development of the special interests of the other party within the boundary lines of such spheres of interest.

"ART. 4. Each of the contracting parties undertakes to refrain from all political action within the sphere of interest of the other party in Manchuria. Furthermore, it has been decided that Russia shall seek no privileges and concessions in the Japanese zone, and Japan none in the Russian zone, that might be injurious to the special interests of either party and that both Governments are to recognize the rights acquired in their spheres of interest, as defined in Article 2 of the Public Treaty of today's date.

"ART. 5. To ensure the working of the mutual stipulations, both parties will enter into an open and friendly exchange of opinions on all matters concerning their special interests in Manchuria. In case these special interests should be threatened, the two Governments will agree on the measures that may become necessary for common action or mutual support in order to protect these interests.

"ART. 6. The present treaty will be kept strictly secret by both Governments."

[1]For example, the Convention for reciprocal protection of industrial property in China, signed in Tokyo on June 23, 1911, or the Convention of August 14, 1911, concerning railway connections in Manchuria.

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one made public under the title of "Convention in Regard to Co-operation in the Far East," the other, kept secret, amounted to a treaty of alliance.[1] There is no trace left of the former enmity of these two Powers, acting now as close and old friends, ready to stand by one another against "any third Power whatsoever" (Article 1 of the secret treaty of 1916).

This last phrase of the treaty of 1916 very naturally aroused the greatest concern among several foreign Powers, as it forcibly expressed a defensive alliance of the two autocratic Empires, whose policy could so easily develop offensive aims. For China it meant the final loss of her Northern Provinces and a very effectively "closed door" for her northern markets. For the outside world it meant a compact, built up on secret agreements, that could be dangerous on account of the undemocratic form of government of the two contracting Powers. In view of the tremendous significance of the enumerated Russo-Japanese treaties, it would seem quite necessary that their texts should be made public. This could be achieved the more easily at the present day because, on account of the collapse of Russia, they all have lost their political importance.

Of course it is not the mere fact of Russia concluding a friendly alliance with Japan that could ever be objected to or feared by the other Powers, but, rather, the evident aims that such an understanding had in view. Nobody could object to the establishment and growth of friendship and good-will between the two Far Eastern neighbors. On the contrary, such an agreement could have been hailed with enthusiasm as being far better than the former enmity. Unfortunately, however, this cordial cooperation had in view not only the exploitation of the North China markets to the detriment of Chinese sovereignty rights, but also threatened the integrity of China and was meant to exclude all other Powers, in particular the United States of America, and to frustrate any attempt at establishing an "open door" policy.

[1]The texts of both agreements are published by MacMurray, vol. II, p. 1327-1328. Cf. also J. Spargo, *Russia as an American Problem*, 1920, ch. IV.

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IV. Relations with Mongolia

During the years immediately preceding the Great War, we can witness the inception by Russia of a new policy, this time concerning Mongolia. It might seem as though, thwarted by Japan in her aggression in Manchuria, Russia was now trying to expand her influence in a new direction. Though possessing some deceptive appearances, this movement had no great significance. It never had the backing of the nation at large, nor did even the Government attach much importance to it; only a very few government officials were interested in it, and the support was mainly among the South Siberian tradesmen.

The Mongolian point of contact between Russia and China was not a new one; on the contrary, as we have seen above, it was along the endless stretch of the Mongolian frontier that Russia came first in touch with China, several centuries ago. Yet, notwithstanding this long space of time the contact never developed into anything significant. This fact is easily explained if we consider the general character of the country bordering on the southern frontiers of Siberia. Mongolia is a very sparsely populated country, mostly desert, with but a few inhabited centers. The Mongolian market never amounted to much, the people were poor and trade was lagging. Only in one way do we find that these regions had any importance for the Russian trade, namely, this: through Mongolia several caravan routes lead into China, connecting southern Siberia with some of the Chinese markets; it was along these routes that Russia imported great quantities of Chinese tea and no mean amount of Chinese silk, sending South, in return, some very fine qualities of wool, hides, and different drugs, used by the superstitious Mongols. But even in this latter respect, the Mongolian caravan routes had lately lost most of their importance, because many of the goods could be carried much less expensively and considerably quicker by the Siberian and Manchurian railways. In consequence, there remained only a slight frontier trade of the local population, a fact which is quite sufficient to demonstrate the relative lack of interest in Siberia and Russia, as shown toward the government policy in the Mongolian question.

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From olden days Mongolia was divided into two unequal parts, Outer Mongolia, occupying an extensive territory, but chiefly desert and wilderness, and Inner Mongolia in the South, smaller in size, but more densely inhabited and interesting China very much more, as there existed not only well developed commercial relations with China, but also a numerous Chinese population settled among the Mongols and exploiting the latter ruthlessly. Trouble arose in 1910 over the question of the renewal of the Russian-Chinese Treaty of 1881.[1] Russia reminded China of the necessity of renewing this understanding, insisting, however, on the introduction of some important changes. She had greatly increased her trade in Turkestan, and China wanted to profit from this trade by establishing customs there; Russia strongly objected and continued selling Chinese tea in the Turkestan Provinces. China held that such action was not in accord with the treaty of 1881. Russia chose this very propitious moment to ask for new privileges on account of China's ostensible weakness. It was not only the desire of the local Russian tradesmen to acquire some new rights, nor was it simply the restlessness of a few Russian officials, but mainly the wish to take advantage of the troubles that China herself had on hand. Russia had in view, first, the dissatisfaction developing in Northern China; and secondly, the desire for independence from Chinese sovereignty, then existing among the various Mongolian Princes. The latter resented very much the sharp and underhand practices of the Chinese merchants, especially in Inner Mongolia, and the consecutive attempts of reforms on the part of China, moves which the Mongolians considered to be interferences with their local self-government. The Chinese Government, however, notwithstanding its weakness and the various political difficulties surrounding it from all sides, succeeded in withstanding the Russian and Mongolian claims for some time.

In the summer of 1911 the Mongolian Princes decided to cooperate against China. In December, after the Chinese revolution had broken out, they proclaimed themselves independent and elected the Khutukhtu of Urga "Emperor of Mongolia." He was crowned with great ceremony on December 28, 1911. There is

[1]The treaty had been renewed twice already, in 1891 and 1901, without any difficulty.

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no doubt that Russian agents were successfully backing these proceedings, pledging Russian aid to the Mongolian Princes for establishing the independence of Outer Mongolia. In return for this help the Mongolians promised Russia all sorts of privileges and advantages.

Further, in 1912 the Mongolian Princes concluded a treaty of alliance with Thibet having the same object in view, the separation from China and political independence. Meanwhile Russia had declared that she considered the treaty of 1881 still in force, but no longer recognized the neutral zone mentioned in this agreement. Parallel to that, Russia signed a treaty with the newly constituted Mongolian Government at Urga on November 3, 1912. The Russian Government promised to assist Mongolia in establishing and maintaining her autonomy. The Mongolians in return granted many new privileges to Russia, with a definite mention in addition, that no privileges should be given to other foreign subjects, that were not enjoyed by Russians.[1] China had finally to yield, recognizing at last the autonomy of Outer Mongolia. This was achieved by a Russo-Chinese declaration, signed at Peking on November 5, 1913. Russia recognized the suzerainty of China over Outer Mongolia (Article 1), and promised not to keep troops there, with the exception of consular guards. China in turn recognized the autonomy of Outer Mongolia (Article 2), agreeing not to intervene and to refrain from further colonization. A few months later (September 30, 1914), Russia signed at Kiakhta with the Mongolian Government a new agreement, acquiring a concession for the construction of a telegraph line which Mongolia had the right to buy from Russia after the lapse of thrity years. Upon the same day another agreement, of more doubtful significance, concerning railroads in Mongolia, was also signed at Kiakhta. Russia was to advsie Mongolia as to the direction, extent and manner of future construction of railroads (Article 2), and to cooperate if necessary (Article 3).

Japan was carefully watching the development of events in the Mongolian situation. She had very few commercial interests in

[1]The details were enumerated in a special Protocol, annexed to the treaty; cf. MacMurray, *op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 992-996.

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Mongolia, consequently her concern was merely political. Seemingly she attached some importance to the latter, as at Peking in 1915 she signed a special treaty "Respecting South Manchuria and Eastern Inner Mongolia." According to Article 6 of this treaty China promised to open certain ports in Eastern Inner Mongolia for commercial purposes, which meant the gradual penetration of Japan into the Mongolian markets.

This complicated situation, created by the many agreements between Russia, China and Mongolia, as well as by the final recognition of the autonomy of Outer Mongolia, necessitated a readjustment of the mutual relations of these three countries. It was achieved in 1915 by the signing at Kiakhta on June 7, of a Tripartite agreement in regard to Outer Mongolia, by the representatives of the Chinese Republic, the Russian Empire and the new Mongolian State. On January 24, 1916, a second Tripartite agreement settled the question of Mongolian telegraph lines. The changes that took place in Mongolia thus acquired a definite legal form. The three participants agreed to the following principles:

1. Outer Mongolia, though remaining autonomous, recognized Chinese suzerainty.
2. Treaty power remained in China's hands, except for commercial treaties which might be negotiated directly by Mongolian authorities.
3. Russia and China recognized the autonomy of Outer Mongolia, and promised to abstain from all interference with the internal administration of the Mongols.
4. No customs duties were to exist, either on Chinese or Russian imports into Mongolia.
5. Chinese residents were to be under Chinese jurisdiction, Russians under Russian jurisdiction, while special mixed courts were to be established for mixed cases, on the model of the former Russian-Chinese mixed courts of the Russian-Chinese Railroad.
6. China promised to consult Russia on all political questions concerning Outer Mongolia, the latter being practically under the joint protection of Russia and China.[1]

[1] The *American Journal of International Law*, 1916, vol. x, p. 798, contains an excellent article on the subject by E. T. WILLIAMS, *The Relations between China, Russia and Mongolia.*

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This state of things, however, did not last long, by reason of the collapse of Russia and of the advance of Japan into Siberia. In 1919 China, feeling much stronger, withdrew the autonomy of Outer Mongolia; the Russian control naturally ceased to exist and all the above-mentioned treaties lapsed. But an entirely new trouble arose, as a consequence of the Russian Civil War. Several times the Russians invaded Mongolia and used Mongolian territory in their fight against the Moscow Bolshevik Government. In 1920, Urga, the Mongolian capital, was captured by a Russian independent general and held for a short while. The anti-Bolshevik forces tried to establish a strategic base for themselves in Mongolia, from which they could attack their Russian enemies.[1] Later on Mongolia had to suffer for yet another reason. The Bolshevik Government endeavored to secure a way of communication with China and the outside world through Mongolia. For that purpose, not only did their agents, with mails and goods, use the Mongolian routes to enter China, and spread their influence and propaganda, but their generals also were ordered to enter Mongolia and protect these routes, ousting if possible the anti-Bolshevik forces from their temporary strongholds. This they accomplished in a short time, getting practically in control of Outer Mongolia. This last summer, the Bolshevik armies were still there and the Moscow Government made public in August their correspondence with the Mongolians. The latter were supposed to have asked the Russians not to withdraw the Bolshevik troops, as long as anti-Bolshevik forces were in the vicinity.[1] Moscow gladly consented to leave the troops there, but promised to withdraw them as soon as the common enemy should disappear. The Mongolian authorities are called by the Russians "The People's Revolutionary Government of Mongolia." Moscow, however, hints that this Government is not very firm in the saddle. Unfortunately, one cannot be sure that this is the final episode in the Russian-Mongolian relations.

[1]The events of those fateful years in Mongolia are described, for example, by PERRY-AYSCOUGH and OTTA BARRY, *With the Russians in Mongolia.*

[1]Cf. *Isvestia,* August 10 and 12, 1921.

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V. Present Outlook

The events of these last years, the Russian Revolution, the Civil War and other wars, naturally changed and warped the whole situation in the Far East of Russia. At the present day it is quite impossible to say what the final outcome may be.

The revolutionary developments were heralded long before the outbreak of March, 1917, by the gradual weakening of Russia's influence in the Far East. Absorbed as she was by the Great War, she naturally paid much less attention to her outstanding Provinces. Failing and degenerating autocracy was gradually forced to abandon all its imperialistic designs and hopes, whereas the nation as a whole never had such ambitions and was always quite willing to let the Far Eastern Districts live their own lives and build up their own future. This attitude was very much to the liking of the Siberian and Far Eastern Russian population which, as we have seen, from early days showed a constantly growing desire for a firmly established self-government.

The local natural resources are so great, most of them being yet untouched, the country on the whole is so little developed, that there remains ample room for expansion without necessity for extending political influence into foreign lands. What the Siberian commercial interests wanted and needed was entrance into Manchuria; in other words, the "open door," championed by the Government of the United States. This meant that territorially the Russians were content with what they had secured by this time, viz., the left bank of the Amur River, all territories North of it up to the Arctic Sea, and the narrow strip of land that united Vladivostok with Irkutsk across Manchuria, along the tracks of the Chinese Eastern Railway. In case the political influences were eliminated the Russian people could and ought to be satisfied with this situation, which allowed them to make use of the North China markets in a peaceful and amicable way, without hurting the feelings or rights of the Chinese. And on the whole, this was the case. The Russian people of the European Provinces frankly did not care about the Siberian life and happenings. The Siberians themselves were also quite content, with the possible exception of some adventurous frontiersmen or some

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quarrelsome local officials, whereas the Central Government, handicapped by war and revolution, was obviously losing its hold over the administration of the vast Empire.

Such a condition of domestic and foreign affairs for China, seemed to confirm the farsighted wisdom of Li-Hung-Chang, who always considered the friendly connection with Russia of the greatest possible advantage to China; the latter could find there a trustworthy friend, ready to stand by in case of a conflict with some other great Power, and also to assist her people in developing commercially and industrially their northern market. This time, however, the unexpected danger came from another quarter, and was caused by the passing away of the dying regime in Russia. The Tsar's Government, blind to the signs of the time, and deaf to the many warnings of the contemporaries, was going headlong toward a national disaster. A weak and disintegrated Russia was not only of no help to China, but, on the contrary, became for herself a menace, creating an irresistible temptation for other Powers to exploit her weakness and enter her territories for their own imperialistic expansion. These last years the political situation of Russia shows very many similarities to that of China.

As to the relations of Russia to Japan since the beginning of the Great War and up to the Revolution, we can see the same gradual decline of Russia's interest in Far Eastern politics, as described above. This meant that Japan, as time went on, acquired more and more freedom of action on the Pacific coast, as well as in the shaping of her foreign relations in general. This Russian attitude explains for instance, the situation and the meaning from the Russian point of view of the secret treaty with Japan, of July 3, 1916. The Russian nation was indifferent to this alliance, caring very little for what was going on in the Far East. The European war was taxing all the possible resources, intellectual and physical, of the people, and the revolutionary dissatisfaction was already powerful and threatening, distracting the Government to the utmost. Russia's Allies meanwhile were pressing her to enter into closer cooperation with Japan and draw the latter more into the European struggle. France was possibly hoping for material help, in men, arms and vessels. England was

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glad to see a third party taking a share in her own alliance, which was in many ways creating her all sorts of difficulties; the participation of Russia was seemingly satisfying Japan, thus somewhat mitigating the obligations of Great Britain. Finally, Japan found in the secret alliance of 1916 a splendid confirmation of her most coveted ambition and policies. It was a legal sanction to her equality as a great Power, opening the door for her to an eventual participation in the final settlements of the war on absolutely equal terms, and vouchsafing her complete freedom of action in the Far East. The wording of the secret treaty of 1916 and in particular the plural used in Article 4 in the description of the guarantee "given by its Allies" seems to show that the Contracting Powers had only the Teuton enemies in view, when they established this alliance. The Entente Powers simply wanted that Japan should cooperate more actively in the war; this was certainly the idea that the Russians had. Though this treaty was secret, the fact of the conclusion of an alliance soon leaked out and public opinion, as well as the Russian press, took the mentioned object of the alliance for granted without questioning the possible consequences. It is only later, and especially now that the war with Germany is over, that the aims of the Japanese Government and the significance of the words "any third Power whatsoever, having hostile designs against Russia or Japan" (Article 1), began to arouse a great concern among certain nations and governments.

* * *

The revolutionary wave that broke up the Tsar's Government during the first half of March, 1917, took some time before it reached Siberia and the Far Eastern Provinces. It created great joy, as in the rest of Russia, among the Siberian population, but especially amidst the political exiles, who promptly received permission to come back into European Russia. During the months of April there was a considerable stream of them returning to their homes, and eager to participate in the revolution or as they understood it, the regeneration of Russia. This exodus left quite a void in the Siberian communities, and deprived the latter of a considerable portion of their educated forces. Nevertheless,

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sufficient enlightened elements were left to satisfy the new needs of the awakened people, and thus there soon became evident a strong desire among the latter to enlarge further the principles and practice of local self-government. There never existed any question of separation from Russia among the Siberians; all they wanted was the establishment of a distinct, self-governing unit, protected from the interference of the Central Government in local affairs and especially in the financial administration.

The discussion and settlement of local affairs was to be achieved by a Siberian Assembly, a sort of local Parliament or possibly even a restricted Constituent Assembly. Later on this logically helped very much the formation of a Regional Government, which later still proved to be the pivotal point of the Siberian struggle against the Bolshevik Government. The latter was gradually driving the anti-Bolshevik forces and organizations out of European Russia. Thus, in the autumn of 1918 the members of the temporary Ufa Government and the remnants of the Pan-Russian Constituent Assembly had to flee Eastward from the Bolshevik onslaught and very soon merged at Omsk with the Siberian government organization.

In November, 1918, the Koltchak coup followed, replacing these men by a new anti-Bolshevik Government, remaining in power up to the autumn of 1919 and assuming the title and functions of an All-Russian anti-Bolshevik Government.

Meanwhile a few Czech regiments were also valiantly fighting their way eastward, because the Allies promised to bring them home to their own liberated country, on condition that they assist the Russians to resist the bolsheviki and possibly even establish a new front against Germany.

The Allies, especially Great Britain and France, were endeavoring to persuade the Government of the United States also to participate actively in such a policy, having in view both parallel objects, the fight against Bolshevism and the building up of a new front against Germany, that would divert at least some of her military resources from the Western front. Naturally the position of Japan in this matter became most prominent; the question of her participation had to be discussed and her going into Siberia in some form or other decided upon.

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Such were the transactions between the Allied and Associated Powers during the summer months of 1918, which finally culminated in the decision of President Wilson, taken in July, of sending several regiments to Vladivostok and also agreeing to a more active cooperation of Japan. That such participation of Japan should be admitted is by no means strange or inexplicable; on the contrary, it was but natural that the Japanese should be asked to cooperate. They were the nearest neighbors and had many interests in common, besides they were the close Allies of Russia and England, according to the treaties of 1916 and 1920, and relatively much less involved in the European struggle. Their army was at home, ready for action, and there existed no danger of any outside attack on Japan, hence she could lend a considerable part of her armed forces for the allied cause. Moreover, there is very good reason to believe that at that time Japan was absolutely impartial toward Russia, and had no idea of expansion into Russian territory or of spreading her political or commercial interests and influences inland from the Pacific coast. All this meant that under certain conditions the allied cooperation, with the inclusion of Japan, could bring forth only satisfactory results for Siberia and ultimately for Russia. Fate, however, willed otherwise.

According to the decision of the Allies in July, 1918, with the few Americans, there were sent from Japan 72,000 men, who controlled for a considerable time the railroad and towns along the line from Vladivostok far into Western Siberia. Already during the Koltchak regime of Omsk, there was felt a strong Japanese influence in the Far Eastern Provinces, which constantly tended to weaken the Siberian Government. The most conspicuous case was that of "general" Semenoff, firmly established in Chita, with the assistance of Japanese support. Semenoff did not wish to acknowledge the supremacy of Koltchak and in this way called forth two evil consequences for the latter. First, by hampering the rule of the Omsk Government, Semenoff was assisting the processes of dismemberment of the Siberian and Far Eastern Provinces. Secondly, he was greatly increasing the influence of Japan in the same Provinces. Indirectly Semenoff's policy proved to be detrimental to China. Thus it happened

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that with Japanese connivance one important result was accomplished; the Far Eastern Provinces of the former Empire of the Tsar were split into two parts, the distinct line of demarcation existing to the present day. It went North-South across the Lake Baikal; west of that line remained the Siberian Provinces, at first with their own anti-Bolshevik Government, but subdued later by the Moscow armies. East of the line there crystallized the Far Eastern Republic, with headquarters at Chita, which endeavored to control the Russian territory toward the Pacific as far as Vladivostok, but with only sporadic success.

* * *

The Western Siberian Provinces at present live their own lives, hardly feeling the control of the Central Government of Moscow. Nominally, the Bolsheviki still claim their sovereignty. In the larger cities, especially in Irkutsk and Krasnoyarsk, there are very strong Bolshevik organizations playing the rôle of provincial or regional governments, sometimes accepting the rule and direction of Moscow, and sometimes acting absolutely independently. The enormous distances that separate Siberia from Moscow help very much to foster such independence. But off the main railroad line that runs across Siberia, and especially in the rural districts the Bolshevik rule has no influence whatever and really does not exist. As in days of very primitive culture, each village, hamlet or community has its own interests, its own life, its own organization, and has hardly anything to do with the outside world, at times not even realizing that such a world exists. The people live on their own produce, being everywhere overwhelmingly agricultural. They can not, however, improve their methods or intensify their production on account of the lack of implements, not being able to buy new ones anywhere to replace the old ones now badly used up. Even the insignificant trade with Mongolia or China has dwindled to nothing. The horrible meaning of this to Russia becomes evident, if we consider the former export of wheat and other foodstuffs from Siberia, which were carried out in such great quantities that they supplied the need of very many Russian towns and in addition constituted a large part of Russia's foreign export. All foreign

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exports stopped long ago, including the supply of foodstuffs from Siberia, which could have so easily relieved the present famine situation.

In the Siberian towns of these Provinces we find quite a numerous element of Chinese. The latter have come in only lately. In former days there were always a few coming over the border, but not often did they want to settle down permanently among the Russians. This changed suddenly and entirely the moment the Siberian Railway was opened to traffic. After 1900 the Chinese began to come in great numbers, creating alarm among many Siberians, who looked upon this immigration with great misgivings. And many of the Chinese emigrants seemed to come with the intention of settling down permanently. Their commercial efficiency, their pacific ways, their great thrift and extremely small personal needs made them formidable competitors. Not many Russians could stand competition with them and they looked upon this Chinese influx as a most dangerous form of "peaceful penetration." The danger was augmented by the exceedingly long frontier line, which could not be shut off by any purely physical means. A backward glance over this period discloses that, while alarm was felt in certain circles, the local population, on the whole, continued to live peacefully side-by-side in towns, like Irkutsk, where Chinese colonies grew to a considerable size. At present immigration has ceased, partly because of the Russian Civil War and partly on account of China's troubles with the Mongols.

* * *

While the Civil War was raging in Siberia and European Russia, the Far Eastern Provinces themselves were divided into several parts.

First, there was the Chita Center, now known as the Far Eastern Republic; secondly, came Vladivostok and the surrounding country, mostly along the Pacific coast; thirdly, Khabarovsk and the Districts along the banks of the Amur, with a vast, sparsely inhabited Hinterland, stretching as far as Kamchatka; fourthly, the Russian half of the Sakhalin Island; and fifthly, the strip of land across Manchuria, belonging to the Chinese Eastern Railway.

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From the times of Semenoff, the Chita Government Center was constantly under the strong influence of the Japanese. Semenoff did not hold out long after the fall of Koltchak, and was himself driven out and replaced by a semi-Bolshevik Government, which succeeded in establishing the Far Eastern Republic. This Republic has decided Bolshevik leanings, and often accepted the political guidance of Moscow, but on the whole maintained its individuality and independence, and at times even showed a pronounced tendency toward further expansion. Its object in this respect was to get the control of Vladivostok; the regions along the Amur interested Chita very little and could be only a "route" or an opening further East. The Manchurian Railway was out of their reach, neither the Japanese, nor the Chinese being willing to give the line over to the Russians of any political creed whatsoever. So the coveted opening for Chita was Vladivostok, which would have meant a doorway to the outside world. But Vladivostok was not so easy to get, because of the distance separating it from Chita, and on account of quite different Japanese interests there, and also because the Russians of the Maritime Province were by no means ready to accept the Chita rule. However, the Far Eastern Republic did advance successfully along the Amur and is controlling at present this region as far as Khabarovsk. It finally succeeded in ousting the Japanese, defeating the White anti-Bolshevik generals who tried to advance from Mongolia, and achieved a certain stability of local administration. It lives in peace westward and has friendly relations with the Bolshevik group in control of Irkutsk, being also in constant communication with the Government of Moscow. Chita evidently considers itself independent from the Moscow Government, though the latter has not ceased hoping to control it eventually. The political color of the Chita Government is decidedly radical, though not communistic. There are a few bolsheviki in the Government, but they do not have command of the situation at all. Socialists of other denominations are more influential and the *bourgeois* element is not excluded.

The recent transactions between this Government and the Japanese at Dairen have one object in view; *i. e.,* the evacuation of Vladivostok by the Japanese. In Chita and the Transbaikal

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Districts the Japanese are no more to be seen; most of them have gone home of their own accord, having found the sentiment of the local people unfriendly, but they still control the Pacific coast from Vladivostok, on which the Chita Government laid their eyes long ago. At present the Chita representatives are trying to convince the Japanese of the necessity of evacuating Vladivostok as well, which would give the Far Eastern Republic the chance to occupy the Maritime Province, destroy the local anti-Bolshevik Government there, and thus get rid of their last opponent in the Far East and acquire at the same time an outlet to the sea. The Japanese policy in the matter is not yet clear and probably depends on entirely different factors, the European and American policies included.

The country north of the Amur, the District of Yakutsk and the Kamchatka peninsula are in a somewhat different position. The Moscow Government never was willing to lose Yakutsk and Kamchatka on account of their tremendous, though yet quite unexplored natural resources. The Bolsheviki always hoped to be able to exploit these regions, by granting concessions to foreigners. The most conspicuous case is the grant of a huge concession to Washington Vanderlip. The trouble with such concessions, however, is the lack of assurance, legal and political, that such grants will retain their value in case a change of government occurs in Russia. The indications are that no new government, whatever its political form or doctrine, will be willing or able to recognize the validity of the Bolshevik grants.

The ease with which the nominal control of Moscow could still maintain itself in Yakutsk and Kamchatka, is explained by the great indifference of the Russian people toward these far-away regions which hold for them no political significance whatever.

Most of the inhabited centers and hamlets are likewise living their own lives, not caring for the outside world. Many of them went through a stage of Bolshevik rule, instituted and dominated by local men. Along the northern coast of the Pacific, the Japanese played an important rôle, because of the fisheries. Japan is very much interested in acquiring full control of the fisheries, which have an immense economic value, by reason of the inexhaustible supply of fish. During the Tsar's régime, Japan made

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an effort to secure for herself these fisheries; she tried to get them at Portsmouth, in 1905, and acquired several privileges by the subsequent conventions with Russia. She is now endeavoring to establish her exclusive control over them.[1]

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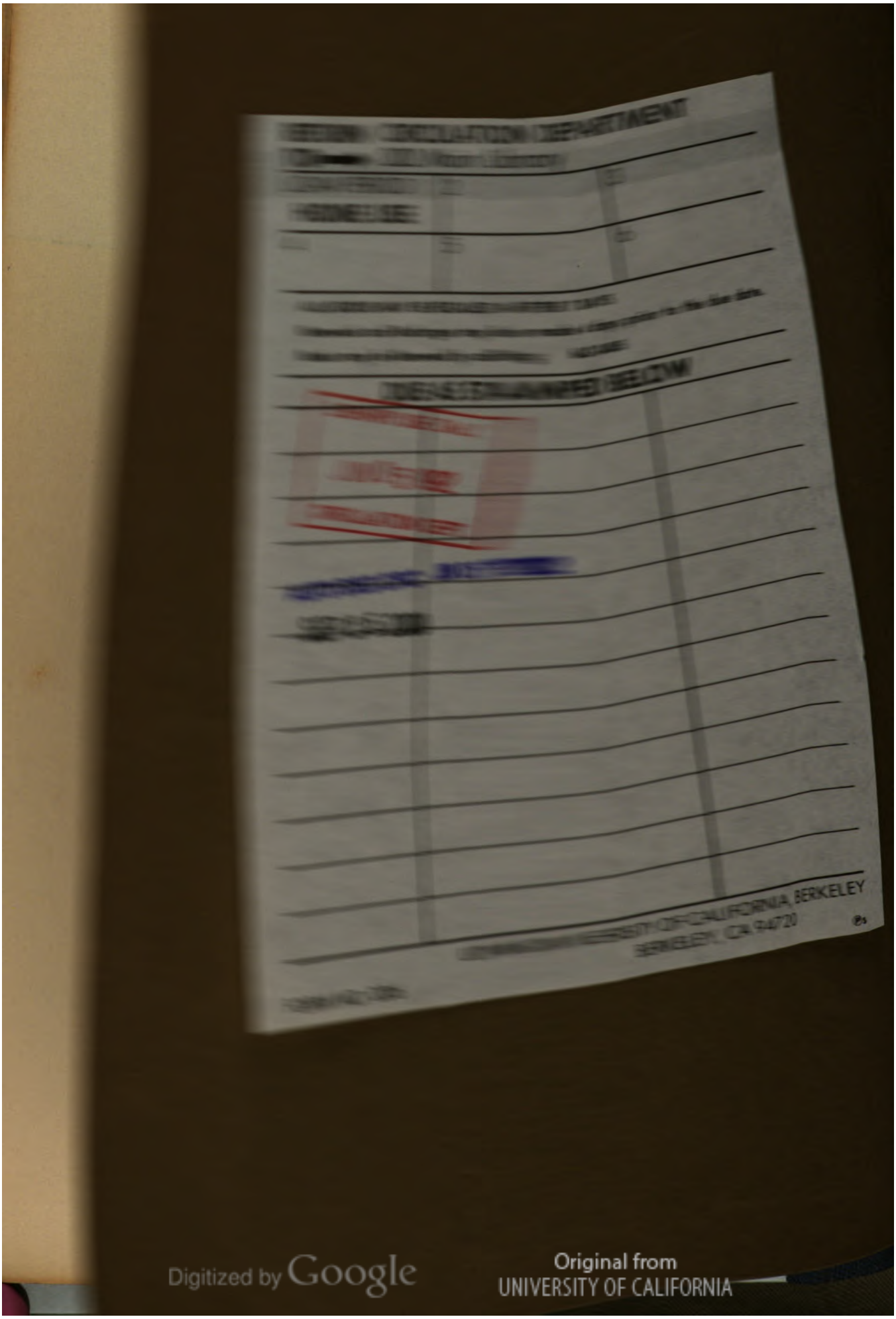

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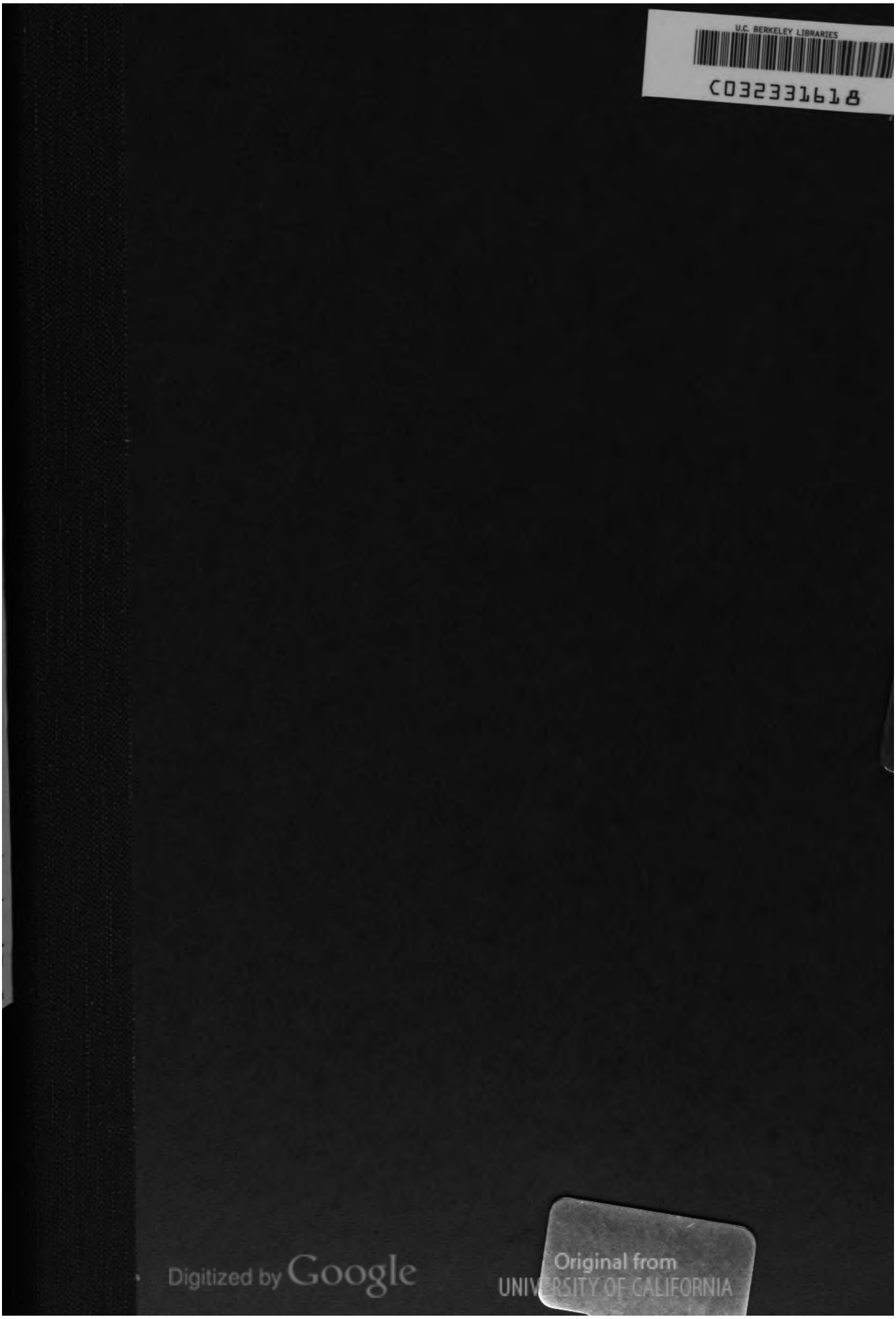
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